

Your Role as a Chapter Advisor

The success of the DECA chapter begins with you, the chapter advisor. The chapter's program of activities should be student-created and student-directed. However, it is essential that the students have the counsel of an adult advisor in planning their activities. You should provide guidance and counsel to the chapter members, develop the interest and support of adults, and assume responsibility for the total chapter program. To do this, you will need to assume the roles of counselor, communicator, and leader.

Counselor: Your first concern as a chapter advisor should be the educational development of the individual student chapter members. As a counselor, you should permit students to conduct their own program of activities. However, you must also realize that the typical young person may lack sufficient maturity to organize and carry out a chapter program of activities. It is your responsibility to sense when assistance is needed, stimulate student participation, and channel student efforts into activities that have educational benefits.

Communicator: The breadth and scope of the marketing and cooperative education programs involves many adults who are interested in the development of individual students. They include school officials, teachers, training sponsors, business and community leaders, and parents. If you seek the advice, assistance, and participation of these individuals, your chapter will be more successful.

Leader: The chapter advisor is the adult leader in the chapter. Various activities may be the responsibility of chapter officers who, in turn, delegate these responsibilities of student members. It is, however, the responsibility of the chapter advisor to see that all activities are conducted within educational objectives, and that the welfare of all participating students is protected.

Educate Yourself!

- Review this Missouri DECA Handbook and other materials available through DECA Images.
- Communicate with your District Advisor, District Competitive Events Director, State Advisor, or national DECA staff and request assistance.
- Attend a New Advisors In-service.

Get Organized

- Develop a personal philosophy, which identifies your beliefs about the purpose of this organization, the role and responsibilities of the chapter advisor, and the role and responsibilities of student members.
- Schedule a meeting with your administration to discuss the purposes, philosophy, and positive benefits of a vocational student organization. In general, administrators will want to know:

- * "What steps will have to be taken to establish the chapter?"
- * "What facilities will be used and how?"
- * "What time will be required of the teacher?"
- * "What will be the extent of the activities?"
- * "What will be the involvement of people outside the school?"
- * "How do you intend to finance activities?"

Sell DECA to Your Students

A successful DECA chapter requires knowledgeable and motivated members. Using a positive attitude and adequate time during class, convey to students the importance of the organization and its activities. If possible, invite the officers from an existing chapter to speak at your school. Use videos, visuals, and pictures to illustrate the "fun" of DECA.

Communicating with parents often serves to promote student interest. Parents want schools to provide the best education possible for their children. Explain to parents how the youth organization can benefit their sons and daughters. Then, make an effort to keep them updated about the plans and accomplishments of the chapter.

Form the Chapter

- Conduct an organizational meeting. While interest is high, hold a meeting, which is impressive and has an impact on the students.
- Orient students to the organization. Involve students in activities that bring immediate returns.
- Develop a chapter constitution/by-laws, and submit it to the State Advisor and the activity director of your school.
- Send your state and national membership dues and roster to Missouri DECA, P. O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102 by the established deadline date.

If you are starting to feel a bit overwhelmed, please refer to the DECA Directory located in this Missouri DECA Guide. The names and addresses of knowledgeable and helpful individuals provide you with invaluable resources. The important thing is that the decision to use DECA as a valuable part of your instructional program will pay big dividends for you and your students!